

Delaware State Government Diversity and Inclusion Study Released

Dover, DE – The Office of Management and Budget today released a report commissioned by Governor Jack Markell earlier this year in an ongoing effort to build a welcoming work environment across State government that fully embraces diversity and equal opportunity for all employees.

“I have been clear that my administration is committed to ensuring that we foster a healthy, supportive, and responsive work environment for all State employees,” Governor Markell said. “Reports we received from faith leaders and the NAACP that state employees experienced a lack of support from their supervisors and organizational leadership, and felt race contributed to limited promotional opportunities were of concern to me.”

The Governor responded by encouraging State employees to participate in state-wide hearings conducted by the Delaware Faith in Action Council and the NAACP, and this past September commissioned Ivy Planning Group to conduct an independent, comprehensive review of State policies, procedures, and organizational structure and to make recommendations to guide the State’s equity, diversity and inclusion efforts.

Ivy’s work throughout the fall was informed by site visits across state agencies, survey responses from nearly 6,000 state employees, 110 focus groups and 144 interviews it conducted with demographically diverse groups of state employees and external stakeholders, and an analysis of State employment data. Ivy’s Report, presented this week, noted that the State government’s workforce reflects the diversity and demographic trends of Delaware, though there are areas of

under-representation and opportunities for improvement. The report recognized the State's successful efforts to increase employment of people with disabilities and to extend employment protections and marriage equality to the LGBTQ community. It documented the need for improvement within the State's human resources systems and administrative practices, and proposed more than 40 recommendations to help State government better support diversity and inclusion. These recommendations included enhancing recruitment to attract diverse candidates, new efforts to prepare employees for advancement, ensuring that a diverse cross-section of employees are considered for promotion, increasing the capacity of supervisors to address informal employee complaints, and implementing mediation efforts to address formal grievances.

"I appreciate the willingness of so many state employees to complete the survey and share their experiences through interviews and focus groups, and also thank the community groups who offered their perspectives" the Governor said. "We value everyone's participation in this process, which has led to the meaningful recommendations in this blueprint for action moving forward. By fulfilling our obligation to ask hard questions and make needed reforms, we will strengthen State government's place as an employer of choice for Delawareans seeking impactful careers, and build a welcoming work environment that values and supports the talents and abilities of all our people."

"We appreciate Governor Markell for his demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion, and for supporting this study. His insight has been invaluable," said Gary A. Smith of Ivy Planning Group. "Delaware's challenges are similar to many other organizations we've worked with, and we are optimistic that the State is well positioned to be a best practice for diversity and inclusion as well as a model for how to move beyond its historical challenges to realize its future

potential.”

The full report from Ivy Planning Group is available online at:

<http://omb.delaware.gov/documents/DiversityInclusionStudy.pdf>

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